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JULIA JOHNS

‘HANDMAID’S TALE: THE MUSICAL’

Your favorite dystopian drama, reimagined in Brooklyn by a cast of comedians. 16

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‘I JUST SIGNED YOUR DEATH WARRANT’

Disgraced U.S. Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar was sentenced to 40 to 175 years in prison by Michigan Judge Rosemarie Aquilina for sexually abusing more than 150 young athletes. 4

GETTY IMAGES

WELCOME TO METRO.US

JOE PANTORNO, SPORTS EDITOR

Former United States Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar was sentenced to 40 to 175 years in prison for criminal sexual conduct in which he abused over 150 women and girls during his two-plus decade tenure with the national team. His sentencing on Wednesday was the conclusion of an emotional seven-day hearing that included 168 impact statements from his victims. For more, turn to page 4 and also visit **metro.us.**

PRESIDENT AGREES TO TESTIFY UNDER OATH

President Donald Trump said on Wednesday evening that he would be willing to be interviewed under oath by special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. election. "I'm looking forward to it, actually," Trump, speaking to reporters at the White House, said of an interview with Mueller. "I would do it under oath." Although Trump has pledged cooperation with Mueller's probe before, Trump made his assertion as the White House and allies in Congress have stepped up attacks on the investigation's credibility and Trump himself has hedged on whether he would answer questions. More recently, Trump's attorneys have been talking to Mueller's team about an interview, according to sources with knowledge of the investigation. "I would like to do it as soon as possible," Trump said.

CHINA'S ILLEGAL OPIOIDS ARRIVE VIA USPS: PROBE

2 Illegal shipments of the powerful and addictive opioid fentanyl are pouring into the United States by mail from China, and the U.S. Postal Service must step up the use of high-tech detection methods to fight the problem, according to a congressional report unveiled on Wednesday. A yearlong probe by a Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs investigation subcommittee found there is easy access for buyers in the U.S. to purchase fentanyl, often in relatively large quantities, through the internet. The drugs are mailed by "labs" in China to individuals who consume them or to middlemen who dilute them for resale. According to the report, the Postal Service has failed to widely deploy a system to capture "advanced electronic data" about packages, which would help identify suspicious mail.

FRENCH PRISON OFFICERS' PROTEST ENTERS SECOND WEEK

3 Wooden palettes burn as prison guards block access to Fresnes prison in Fresnes, France. Three prison guards were injured in a blade attack by a German Al-Qaeda militant in Vendin-le-Vieil prison. Prison guards have entered the second week of a social movement to protest poor and unsecure working conditions in the country's overcrowded jails. Prison staff are demanding improved working conditions after a series of attacks by detainees.

GETTY IMAGES

TRUMP NOW SUPPORTS DREAMER CITIZENSHIP

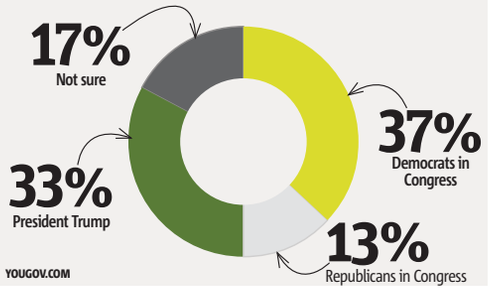
4 President Donald Trump on Wednesday previewed his outline for an immigration bill that he will promote next week, saying he wants $25 billion to build a border wall and is open to granting citizenship to Dreamer immigrants brought to the U.S. as children. Trump said he wanted to offer the Dreamers, protected from deportation by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, an "incentive" of citizenship perhaps in 10 to 12 years. Trump's impromptu comments signaled a major breakthrough, said Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham. "President Trump's support for a pathway to citizenship will help us get strong border security measures as we work to modernize a broken immigration system," Graham said. "I have never felt better about our chances of finding a solution on immigration."

AFTER CRITICISM, APPLE UPDATES IPHONES

5 Apple Inc. announced changes on Wednesday that make good on its promise to allow users to turn off a controversial feature that slows down iPhones when batteries are running low, although it signaled it might take months more to deliver. Apple confirmed in December that software in its iPhone 6, 6s and SE models, which deals with dangers from aging batteries, could slow down the phone's performance. The company is facing lawsuits over the issue and Chief Executive Tim Cook said last week that Apple would release a software update to allow users to turn off the feature. The company said on Wednesday a beta version of its iOS 11.3 operating system would add new features to show battery health and recommend if a battery needs to be serviced.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Who do you think is MOST to blame for the recent shutdown of the federal goverment?



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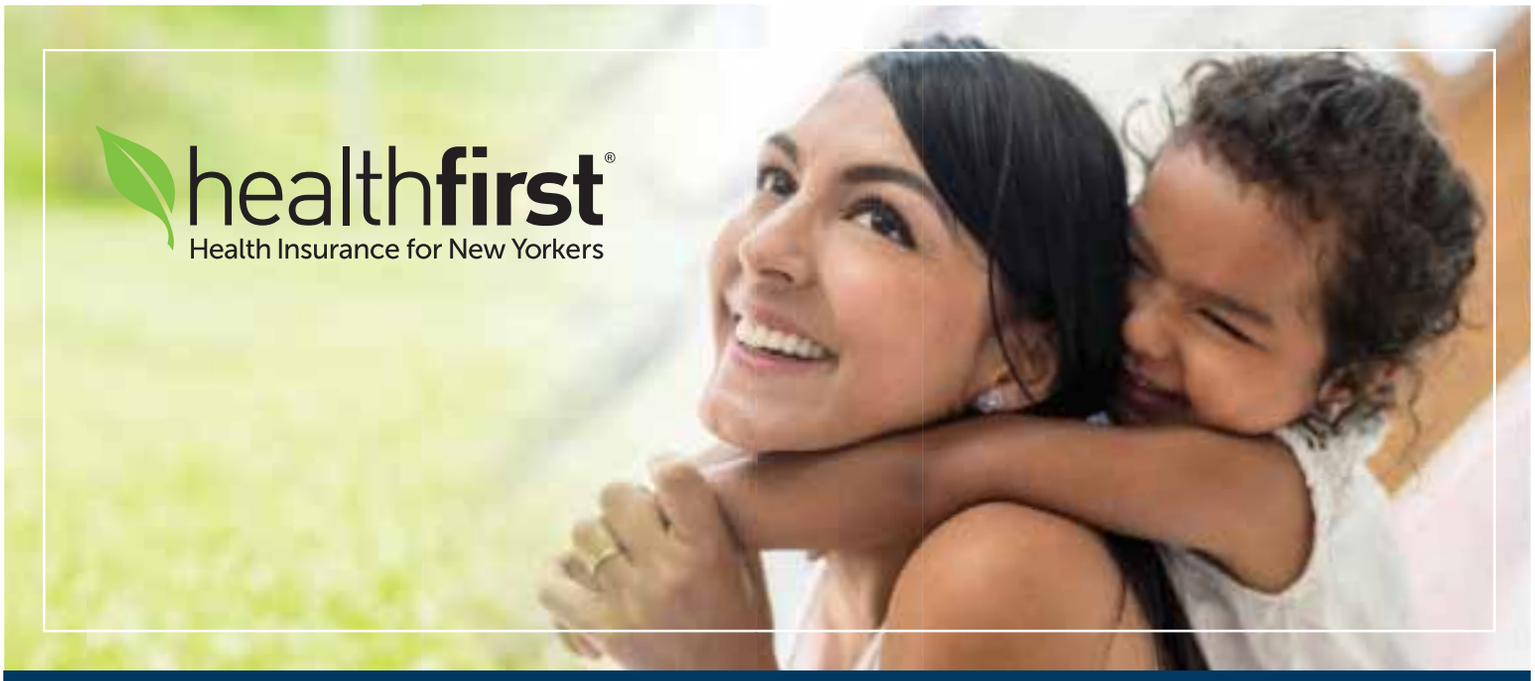

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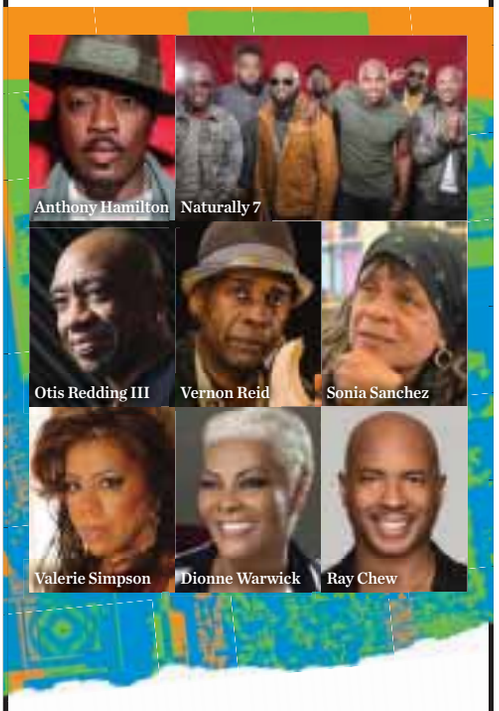
presents

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME



The music, sights, and words that invigorated a nation, stirred protests, and effected change in the 1960s are celebrated. Folk songs and R&B classics like Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come" and Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze" and "We Shall Overcome"—the anthem of the era—define a time when voices were raised and arms were interlocked in a movement seeking justice and social change.

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Sounds of Change
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Sonia Sanchez | Valerie Simpson
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Additional artists to be announced

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Former US Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar gets 175 years in prison

JOE PANTORNO
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The sentencing comes after a weeklong hearing that saw many of his accusers testify.

Former U.S. Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar arrives for impact statements during the sentencing phase of his trial. GETTY IMAGES

Former United States Olympics gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar was sentenced to 40 to 175 years in prison for criminal sexual conduct by a Michigan court on Wednesday morning, concluding a weeklong hearing that saw many of his victims step forward and testify.

"I just signed your death warrant," Judge Rosemarie Aquilina told Nassar in the Lansing, Michigan, courtroom. The disgraced former doctor was already sentenced to 60 years in prison in December on child pornography charges. "Your words these past several days have had a significant emotional effect on myself and shaken me to my core," Nassar said in a final statement. "I will carry your words with me for the rest of my days."

The 54-year-old had pleaded guilty to seven counts of criminal sexual misconduct before the sentencing hearing, which saw 168 impact statements given by his accusers as a part of his plea deal set by Judge Aquilina.

"You are no longer victims. You are survivors. You are very strong," Judge Aquilina said to those who testified.

"You did this for your pleasure and your control," she told to Nassar. "I would not send my dogs to you, sir. … You can't give them back their innocence, their youth. … It was my honor and privilege to sentence you. You do not have the right or privilege to walk outside a prison ever again."

168
NASSAR'S HEARING SAW 168 IMPACT STATEMENTS GIVEN BY HIS ACCUSERS AS PART OF HIS PLEA DEAL SET BY JUDGE AQUILINA.

The seven days of testimonies were highlighted by Olympic gold medalist Aly Raisman, who delivered an emotional 13-minute statement.

"You do realize now the women you so heartlessly abused over such a long period of time are now a force? And you are nothing?" she asked Nassar. "I will not rest until every last trace of your influence on this sport has been destroyed like the cancer it is."

Nassar began working with United States Gymnastics in 1986 while completing his osteopathic medical degree at Michigan State University. Ten years later, he was appointed as national medical coordinator of U.S. Gymnastics.

For over two decades, Nassar sexually abused countless gymnasts, most of them minors, as he used his power to take advantage of unassuming patients.

> ***"The media convinced them that everything I did was wrong and bad. They feel I broke their trust. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."***
> Larry Nassar

However, in a letter he wrote to the court last week, Nassar again defended his actions and put blame on the victims. Judge Aquilina read aloud parts of that letter Wednesday.

"I was a good doctor because my treatments worked, and those patients that are now speaking out are the same ones that praised and came back over and over," Nassar wrote in the letter. "The media convinced them that everything I did was wrong and bad. They feel I broke their trust. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."

Michigan assistant attorney general Angela Povilaitis said in her final remarks that the sentencing hearing would be viewed as "a turning point in how our community, our state, our nation, our culture looks at sexual abuse."

"This courtroom was where the shame that many survivors felt was exorcised from them and put where it belongs, right on him," Povilaitis said.

In 2016, Rachael Denhollander was the first to come forward to file a criminal complaint accusing Nassar of abusing her in 2000. Denhollander's heroics opened the floodgates for more than 140 women to step forward to accuse Nassar, including Simone Biles, Gabby Douglas and McKayla Maroney.

Biles, who captivated the nation during the 2016 Summer Games while winning four gold medals, was one of the last to step forward, revealing on her Twitter page on Jan. 15 that she too was abused by Nassar at U.S. Gymnastics' long-time training center at the Karolyi Ranch in Texas.

This past Friday, U.S. Gymnastics cut ties with the ranch.

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An Animal Care Center's shelter will open in the Bronx in 2024, part of the mayor's goal to have an animal shelter in all five boroughs. MAYOR'S OFFICE

New, large animal shelter coming to the Bronx

An Animal Care Centers of NYC full-service shelter is coming to the Bronx, city officials announced.

KRISTIN TOUSSAINT
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Homeless animals in New York City will have a new resource with a city animal shelter coming to the Bronx.

A 47,000-square-foot Animal Care Centers (ACC) of NYC facility is projected to open in the East Bronx in 2024, city officials announced this week.

The full-service shelter is expected to cost $60 million and will have space for 70 dogs, 140 cats, 30 rabbits and 20 animals from other species. The shelter will provide adoption and veterinary services.

The ACC location in Brooklyn will also undergo renovations, the city announced, and will receive about $27.3 million in funds to expand the facility and increase its adoption capacity. Those renovations are expected to be completed by 2022.

Animal Care Centers of NYC is a nonprofit contracted by the city to run the city's shelters. Mayor Bill de Blasio aims to have a fully operational animal shelter in all five boroughs.

"Our animal shelters deliver services to upwards of 30,000 animals. These two new facilities in the Bronx and Brooklyn will build upon the City's record 93 percent placement rate to ensure that all missing, homeless and abandoned animals within the city receive the care they need," de Blasio said in a statement. "These shelters also will offer direct adoption because we know how much New Yorkers love their pets, especially those in need of a home."

ACC, which was formerly known as Animal Care & Control, has previously faced criticisms for its euthanasia rates. The city shelters do not bill themselves as "no-kill" facilities — the cause of protests from members of the volunteer vigilante group Guardian Angels back in September — but that label is more complicated than many think, experts say.

"There is actually no such a thing as a no-kill shelter," Katy Hansen, communications director at ACC, previously told QNS.

The most common understanding of the "no-kill" label, according to the Washington Post, is a shelter "with a 90 percent 'live release rate' — meaning that nine of every 10 animals admitted leaves alive."

In 2017, more than 93 percent of all dogs and cats at city-operated shelters were placed either through adoptions to the public or through the adoption partner program, officials said.

In 2003, ACC shelters did kill more than 60 percent of the dogs and the cats they took in, according to The New York Times.

But those euthanasia rates have plummeted and adoption rates rose as the ACC received new funding (its budget from the city has more than doubled from $7 million to $13 million since 2007, the Times reports) and with the plans to build new shelters that can ease the strain on existing facilities.

"We are a completely different organization than we were even five years ago. We have become the go-to resource for NYC animal-related issues – from pet adoption to rescue to help with keeping pets and families together," ACC President and CEO Risa Weinstock said in a statement. "We are excited to bring that level of service to the Bronx, with the addition of a new facility."

The ASPCA has also applauded the announcement of the new Bronx shelter, calling it "a critical, life-saving resource for pets and their owners in the Bronx."

"... a critical, life-saving resource for pets and their owners in the Bronx."

The ASPCA, describing the new shelter

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Text reminders help New Yorkers appear in court, avoid arrest warrants

NYC has been testing the use of text messages to remind New Yorkers about upcoming court dates.

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You may get texts reminding you about an upcoming dentist appointment or when your phone bill is due, but what about a reminder of when you have to appear in court?

New York City has been testing a program to use texts to remind defendants about their approaching court appearances, and the alerts have worked, according to a new study.

Receiving any sort of text message about an upcoming court date led to a 21 percent drop in the rate of those who failed to appear in court, according to a study out of the University of Chicago Crime Lab, which partnered with New York City and behavioral economics firm ideas42 to test the digital "nudges."

Over 16 months, between March and June of 2017, those who provided their phone numbers on summons forms were randomly selected to receive texts encouraging their appearance in court.

The program tested out different kind of messages. Some texts emphasized the consequences of failing to appear (like that showing up would help them avoid an arrest warrant), some encouraged the defendant to plan in advance for their court appearance (for example: "You have court on Mon June 03 at One Centre Street Manhattan. What time should you leave to get there by 9:30 a.m.?") and others emphasized that missing court would fall out of step with most people's behaviors.

The most effective messages combined details on the consequences and information on how to make a plan to appear. These types of messages specifically cut failure-to-appear rates by 26 percent.

Now, thanks to these proven results, the Office of Court Administration will send text reminders to everyone who gives their cell phone number on a summons. That move is expected to prevent the issue of thousands of arrest warrants annually, experts said, and help out people who either forget about their court date or don't realize the importance of appearing.

"Little reminders can make a big difference, and these text messages will help people avoid a missed court appearance — and a warrant that could eventually lead to spending a night in jail," Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement. "We've found that these gentle nudges help New Yorkers remember when and where their court appearance is and reduce failure-to-appear rates, and that progress is a great step toward a fairer justice system."

21%

ACCORDING TO A STUDY, THIS NEW INITIATIVE LED TO A 21 PERCENT DROP IN THE RATE OF THOSE WHO FAILED TO APPEAR IN COURT.

"... these text messages will help people avoid a missed court appearance – and a warrant that could eventually lead to spending a night in jail."
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Text messages reminding people about upcoming court dates have led to lower failure-to-appear rates, according to a new study. MAËLICK/FLICKR

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New study: Guards around the city's trees help sewers handle storms

Trees with guards can absorb stormwater faster, leading to less sewer pollution in rivers and oceans, experts said. ROB ELLIOTT, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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Guards protecting the soil around trees along city streets are important to helping cut back pollution from the sewer system, Columbia University researchers found.

City life isn't easy, even for trees.

Their soil gets stepped on by passersby and their trunks serve as bathrooms for the city's pets. That's why some of New York City's street trees have guards or fences that give the trees some space and keep them safe.

Those tree guards affect more than just how healthy your street's saplings look, though. Trees on a protected patch of soil can absorb stormwater more quickly, which eases the burden on the city's sewer system, according to a new study out of Columbia University recently published in the journal Ecological Engineering.

Researchers from Columbia Engineering and the school's Earth Institute looked at how fast water infiltrates into the soil of trees with and without guards. The study focused on trees lining the streets of Morningside Heights in Manhattan.

The soil around trees without guards gets trampled by pedestrians, which affects how quickly it can absorb water. Guarded trees absorbed water an average of six times faster than trees without guards.

But why does it matter how well a tree on the street can absorb water? During heavy storms, the city's aging sewing system can't handle all the water flowing from the streets as well as homes.

That means some water flows into nearby rivers, "raw sewage and all," according to Columbia.

If trees on the street could absorb water more quickly, sewers would overflow less.

New York City's Parks Department lists about 680,000 trees on city streets and already touts their environmental benefits. The city's stormwater runoff is a "major source of pollution entering wetlands, streams, lakes and oceans," according to the department, and "healthy trees can reduce the amount of runoff and pollutants in receiving water."

Each year, more than 1 billion gallons of stormwater are intercepted by the city's trees, a benefit that NYC Parks values at more than $10 million.

And yet, "only 14 percent of New York City trees have protective guards," said Robert Elliot, the study's lead author, in a statement. "Our results suggest street trees could manage six times as much storm water if every tree pit were enclosed."

You can request a guard for your street's trees, according to NYC Parks, by reaching out to your local elected officials, donating to the New York Tree Trust or by applying for a tree work permit and hiring a private contractor to build one.

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EACH YEAR, MORE THAN 1 BILLION GALLONS OF STORMWATER ARE INTERCEPTED BY THE CITY'S TREES.

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...the Pain Is More Like A Prison

And for generations, knee arthritis has given good, hard working people a life sentence of pain and suffering. To make things worse, slick marketers only add to the pain by promising wonder cures. Late night television and your mail box are filled with "wonder arthritis cures" that make wild claims and sound too good to be true . . . ***Because They Are***

Nothing is worse than getting your hopes up - spending your hard earned money - only to be let down time after time.

It is easy to give up...

But while marketers were peddling "wonder cures," real doctors and researchers were hard at work trying to discover a real medical solution. Modern medicine eradicated small pox and polio. Through laser eye surgery, doctors can give almost blind people perfect 20/20 vision. The potential cures on the horizon with breakthroughs like stem cell and regenerative therapies are endless.

Solve The Riddle Of Arthritis Pain?

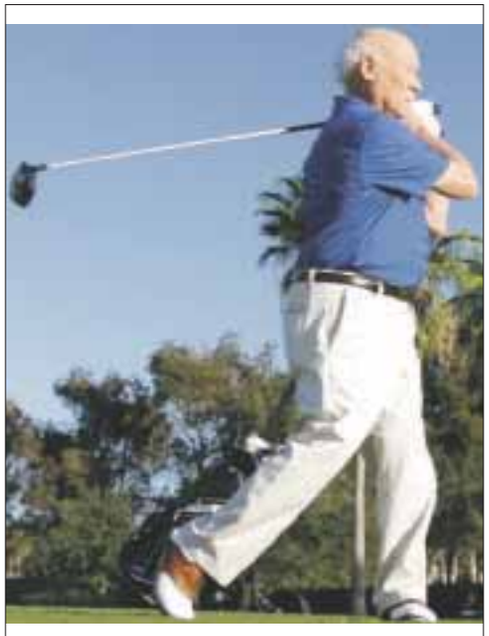
For the past 3 years, that's exactly what a medical clinic in New York City has been doing. The ***NYC Pain MD*** doctors have been able to help thousands of knee arthritis sufferers with cutting-edge treatments and technology older generations could only dream about. One of these treatments in particular has helped thousands of patents ease or eliminate pain and go back to doing their favorite activities like: walking, playing golf, tennis and many more. The treatment is called viscosupplementation. *But wait.* This is NOT the typical viscosupplementation. So if you are one of the many knee arthritis sufferers who already had viscosupplementation and did not get great results - what you are about to discover should be very important. to you in particular. It might even get you out of pain.

Here is why: During viscosupplementation, a special lubricating gel is put directly into your arthritic knee joint. This not only helps the knee joint to glide more smoothly, it acts as a cushion, protects the joint. and relieves a lot of pain. This is often referred to as "joint oil." In many cases, when done properly, this can dramatically lessen knee pain for up to 6 months and much longer in many cases.

And even better - if this treatment works for you the first time - it can be safely repeated when necessary and the results are often better for some.

Like Threading A Needle?

The key to this treatment being successful is actually getting the special lubricating gel directly into the joint where it can go to work. That's why the doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** use very advanced digital imaging that allows them to see directly into the joint and make sure the lubricating gel "hits the spot" and the treatment has the best odds for success. Studies show that doctors doing these types of procedures without this special imaging actually miss the joint space up to one third of the time!



"I've had trouble with my knee walking. I'm a golfer and want to play golf but I couldn't. I made the call and went and it's the best thing I ever did. It's just – now I can play golf, I can walk, I can climb stairs, I can do things I did many years ago".

"It's the smartest thing ever did" "Since I've been going for the treatment for my knees I don't' take any pills, I take not over the counter medication.."

"This a good alternative to surgery." "I am so glad I went. I'm so confident I feel so good about it and I recommend It to everybody." *William La Spina* . Golf Enthusiast

(While we cannot guarantee that all knee arthritis pain sufferers will respond like the patient noted above, we can say these results are possible.)

Why Treatment Can Fail

This is why viscosupplmentation can fail for some people. It is also why many knee arthritis sufferers come to ***NYC Pain MD*** after failed treatments elsewhere... and are finally able to get relief. It is not uncommon for patients to travel hours for these advanced and precise treatment methods.

Patients Should Be Assured About Prescsion Treatments

If you have already had this procedure without this advanced imaging... Or if it was not used throughout the procedure, there is a good chance you did not get the maximum results you could have and should have.

What The Research Says About Results: Can We Slow Down Arthritis? A retrospective study of nearly 1000 cases of knee arthritis between 49 and 79 years old was done by an orthopedic surgeon in Lousiana. Patients with Grade 4 or "bone to bone" who presented for consideration of knee replacement were instead put on a program of image-guided gel injection procedures. Follow up almost 4 years later revealed that about 3 of 4 had done well and had not need surgery...regardless of age or even if overweight.

Another study was done by Pearl Diver research group who reviewed 198,000 files of those who underewent this type of treatment. Follow up 2 years later revealed 82% had not required surgery.

Massive Cost Saving For Patients, Insurance Companies & Medicare?

While surgery may be the best option for some...for others, due to fear of surgical risk, medical ailments that may prohibit surgery or for those that are just seeking less invasive alternatives, the costs savings can be staggering. In a study published in the American Journal of Managed Care, a potential savings of $4706.00 per patient if treated with viscosupplementation was estimated . In a theoretical population of 100,000 (NYC is over 10 million) over a 3 yr. period, 808 knee replacements were projected to be avoided and up to $9,131,819 could potentially be saved by patients, medicare and insurance carriers. *This should be welcome news for rising health care costs.*

Who Can Benefit From This Treatment?

This treatment is not for everyone. But it may be for you if you have sensations of grinding or rubbing, pain on simple weight bearing, getting up from sitting or even simply

reatments Their Parents Could Only Dream About

Patients Go Home With Just A Band-Aid On The Knee... No Surgery - No Hospital

when bending your knees, struggling up and down stairs (like subways), have pain on walking, feel tight and stiff after activities or in the morning or just cannot move like you used to. If this sounds like you, then seeing one of the specially trained doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** could be the best thing you could do for yourself . But it is suggested you do not wait as arthritis can easily worsen with more time.

And this is very important - especially for those who have had viscosupplmentation in the past without good results. Many patients who did not have good results elsewhere are often able to get a favorable results because of the advanced imaging technology and procedure experience at ***NYC Pain MD.***

Even doctors themselves are often patients at NYC Pain MD.

How to Find Out If The Experts At *NYC Pain MD* Can Help You

If you have knee arthritis pain and would like to see if this treatment might help you - the experts at ***NYC Pain MD*** offer a complimentary screening appointment.

This screening will help determine if you are a candidate for treatment and also gives you a chance to get all your questions answered.

If you are a candidate, you will leave knowing that you found the possible way to lessen or even eliminate your knee pain for 6 months or more for many patients.

There is no obligation and if you are not a candidate - the doctor will help you find the best approach for your particular case and refer you to the proper sources. To set up a screening at no cost, simply call **800-741-5340**

The *NYC Pain MD* 'X" Factor ?

NYC Pain MD is a high-tech medical facility equipped with all the necessary equipment to treat appropriate candidates right in their own in-office procedure suites. What does this mean for you? It means no stressful hospital, no intimidating surgical center or out patient facility visits.

This also means you don't have to be “Rich and Famous” because by avoiding all those "fancy" facilities you don't have to bear their severe costs which can often be several times the cost of the treatments themselves. Your experience is far more relaxing with personalized attention. The treatment is gentle. You will go home with nothing but a one inch band-aid on your knee. Many go home or right to work after these virtually painless treatments. There is little to no downtime .

The Secret To Knee Pain Relief? With precision advances in medical science and technology the caring doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** have been able to help so many relieve their pain and get their active lifestyle back.

How To Get A No-Cost Screening & Find Out If This Knee Arthritis Treatment Is For You

The popularity of this treatment is startling. New Yorkers are lining up weekly to find out if the are candidates… patients looking for options other than surgery that really work. But because this is a real medical treatment - it is not for everyone. That’s why the experts have setup an easy screening visit.. This screening will help determine if you are a candidate for additional examination and possible treatment. This screening is offered at no cost to the patient. All your questions answered and you will find out if this treatment is for you .Zero risk or obligation. Just call 800-741-5340 Tell them, “I would like the knee screening.” They will take care of everything. Due to demand, spots are limited - call immediately to avoid unnecessary waiting. The number to call is: 800-741-5340

More Good News About Insurance: *Many insurances including Traditional Medicare (part B) help cover modest to significant portions of these care programs*

To set up a complimentary screening, just call **800-741-5340**. But if you want a screening, we recommend calling right now. Due to time limitations, the center can only offer a limited number of screening per month. They decided to limit the number because they believe in giving every patient the individual time and attention they deserve.

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Open House/Interview Event

Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018
Time: 11:00 am to 3:00 pm and 4PM to 6PM
Locations: Senior Whole Health office, 55 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY
Magellan Health office, 335 Adams, 26th Floor, Brooklyn, NY

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We believe in the power of people to create positive change, and are looking for hard-working, dedicated individuals who want to join a dynamic, growing company here at Senior Whole Health, a Magellan Company.
We will be looking to hire for the following full time positions to support our current business needs in our New York area:

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Geriatric Services Support Coordinator – Responsible for conducting comprehensive reviews of non-clinical services to ensure member satisfaction and retention. Bachelor's degree in relevant, 3 years' experience working in Human Service or managed care environment dealing with special needs population. Must possess a valid driver's license. Bilingual in Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Telephonic & Field Care Managers – RN, LMSW, LCSW – Bilingual in Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese.

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Please forward resume to mbredin@seniorwholehealth.com to schedule a time to come in to meet our hiring team. Walk-ins are also welcome!

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THE FOREMAN FORECAST: THAT SUCKING SOUND

TOM FOREMAN
Analysis
CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the book "My Year of Running Dangerously."

Every now and then, it happens. A used-car dealer, a realtor or some hack pushing an extended warranty on a food processor sighs and admits, "Yeah, you're right. This is no good. You shouldn't be taken in." And now, a U.S. senator has done the same.

West Virginia's Joe Manchin, according to The New York Times, told his pals in the Senate, "This place sucks." Now Manchin is offering more details. What sucks? The tendency of party bosses on the far left and far right to decide which issues get introduced, debated and voted on; the way this practice crushes any spirit of cooperation in the chamber; and the manner in which it all strangles any hope of actually accomplishing something. Summing it up, Manchin told CNN, "I said the place sucks when it doesn't work."

Coming in the wake of what now seems to have been an entirely pointless government shutdown, it's a sentiment I'm sure many voters share. Year after year, they endure breathless political ads from candidates in both parties promising to "change the D.C. culture" or "get things done" or "break the deadlock."

Then they trudge to the polls, cast their ballots and slog home through a flood of disappointment as the party leaders instantly go back to business as usual.

I don't think hardcore conservatives or liberals care much about this. They talk about their concern for America's future, but experience has taught me the only deals they really like are those they can claim as their own.

One could argue ideologues on the left and right have effectively hijacked the democracy — twisting the very process of governing to marginalize any talk of compromise and destroying any champions of such an idea. This is why every vote for "change" — from the left or right — will continue to end in bitter frustration. Because too many of the top political power players don't want anything to do with it, unless their side is sure of absolute victory in the end.

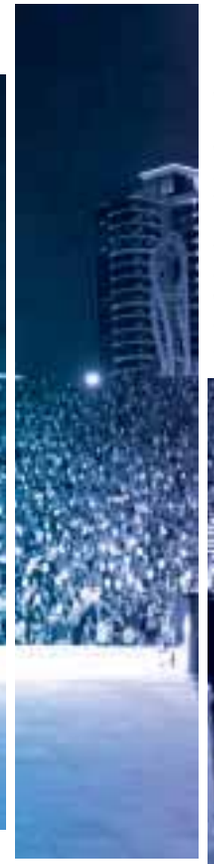
PIANO BATTLE
ANDREAS KERN vs. PAUL CIBIS

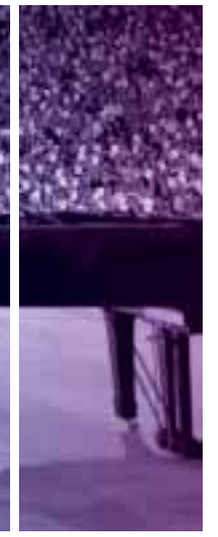
A BATTLE IN WHICH EVERYONE WINS

In 2016, Andreas Kern and Paul Cibis were both invited to perform at the Hong Kong Music Festival, but with only one available slot remaining on the concert schedule. Rather than have one of them relinquish the opportunity, the festival encouraged them to perform together. Less than pleased with the suggestion and determined to outperform each other, Kern and Cibis opted to carry out the challenge on stage, and let the audience decide in what has become an international sensation and a talent competition like no other.

With five rounds of high-intensity piano playing, this last-man-standing performance will appeal to all audiences - those with an ear for the classics, and those with a heart for the energy.

Introducing Piano Battle as a new classical format has intrigued even the most discerning of listeners. The audience votes on the final winner and along the way, guides the direction of the performances to provide a spontaneous, all-original concert each and every time.





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Why is everyone adding mushrooms to their coffee?

Mushrooms might be a tasty addition to pizzas, pasta sauces and Philly cheesesteak sandwiches, but would you drop a few of them into your morning cup of coffee?

It might seem a bit absurd, even in today's butter-coffee-obsessed world, but mushroom coffee is being touted as the next big thing in wellness.

Mushroom coffee seems to only be available in instant form right now. ISTOCK

Is mushroom coffee good for you?

Four Sigmatic — the main company behind the mushroom coffee craze — makes their brews from four different types of mushrooms: Reishi, cordyceps, chaga and lion's mane. These mushrooms (like all mushrooms) contain vitamins and nutrients like selenium and vitamin D, along with fiber, protein and antioxidants. Mushrooms are also said to help improve overall health by reducing stress, increasing focus and aiding weight loss.

Four Sigmatic claims the same benefits in mushroom coffee with less caffeine and jitters.

"With mushroom coffee, I feel energized and alert without feeling anxious, restless, or experiencing an accelerated heart rate," Joanna Townsend wrote in a piece for Fast Company of her monthlong experiment drinking it. "I feel grounded, too, and even find myself sleeping quite well, even on days when I have a cup of coffee at 3 or 4 p.m., which usually would have sabotaged my 10 p.m. bedtime and delayed my ability to fall asleep."

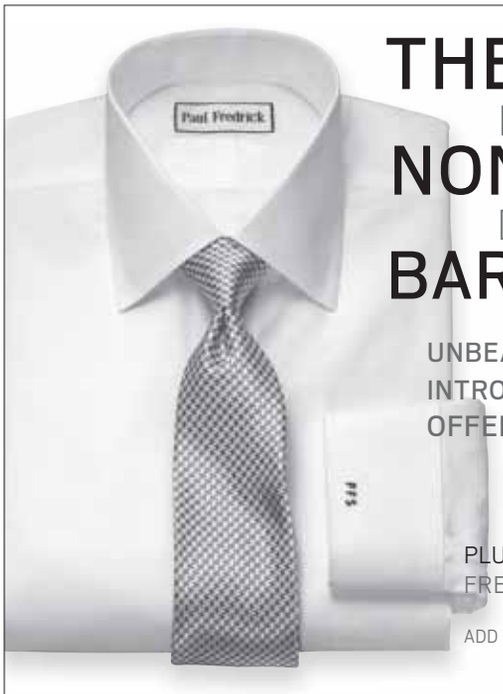
The downside: Medicinal mushrooms (like chaga) are known to have blood-thinning effects, so you shouldn't take them before surgery or if you're already on blood-thinning medication.

How does mushroom coffee taste?

Full disclosure: We haven't tried it yet, but fans rave about the fungi caffeine.

"It doesn't taste like mushrooms at all, and the prep is the same as regular coffee," Townsend wrote, adding that the mix of mushrooms are grounded into a powder.

"It's not that bad," Joe Avella said in a Business Insider video, adding that he sometimes added a splash of cream to help the taste. MEAGAN MORRIS



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Presenter: Ronny Cohen, MD.

Location: NYC Health + Hospitals/Woodhull.
760 Broadway, 10th Floor Solarium, Brooklyn, NY.

Info: This lecture is free and open to the public, but you must RSVP. To attend, call 718-963-5771.

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For more features stories, visit metro.us

the word

Amber & Elon are back on... again

Your favorite on-again, off-again couple is back on: Amber Heard and Elon Musk have reportedly reunited again. Ugh.

After splitting in August due to "conflicting schedules" — sure! — Heard and Musk were spotted holding hands at dinner in L.A. on Monday. A few moments later, a source confirmed to Page Six that they are, and we quote, "together at the moment." Man, they say romance is dead, and we're pretty sure this is just proof.

Fact is, though, Musk is just a thirsty dude. He told Rolling Stone in November that he can't be happy unless he's in a relationship. Uh.

"If I'm not in love, if I'm not with a long-term companion, I cannot be happy," he said. "I will never be happy without having someone. Going to sleep alone kills me."

Musk, honey. You gotta love yourself before you love anybody else, babe! That's like Self-Care 101. Get into it, my dude.

Ugh, these two.

How Harry & Meghan met

Beautiful, famous people: they're just like us! Kind of.
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Turns out Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are closer to human than we thought. Aw, man.

Meghan and Harry had admitted previously that their first meeting was thanks to a mutual friend who played matchmaker. Now, E! News reports that the secret matchmaker is no other than the excessively named Violet von Westenholz, Harry's childhood friend — and the daughter of a baron, naturally.

A source tells E! News that Violet and Meghan had become friends through Violet's PR work with Ralph Lauren. And when Harry told Violet that he was having trouble finding the one, Violet said she might just have the perfect girl for him. And the rest is, as they say, history!

We're just wondering if we could meet up with Violet and confide in her our fears and worries and get set up with a really photogenic, really charming person. Call us, Violet! Please, for the love of Dumbledore. Call us.

Ann Curry slams Megyn Kelly

Ann Curry is still on her "I'm not having that" tour and we are all the way here for it.The latest? Curry guest-hosted "The View" and touched on the blossoming feud between Jane Fonda and Megyn Kelly. Kelly took a bunch of time out of her show earlier this week to slam Fonda and make things hashtag personal — because Kelly apparently forgot she now works for "Today" and not Fox News.

Curry — who is like, a mature, actual journalist and normal human being — is decidedly #TeamFonda. "We're supposed to be humble," she said. "We're supposed to use whatever time we're given to shine a light on other stories.

"There are so many stories that we're not covering," she continued. "And to take time with this … is not journalism." IS. NOT. JOURNALISM.

Yas, queen!

Yas!

But seriously: More Currys in the world, please. For every Lauer who is fired, may there be tens of Currys coming to our rescue.

Darren Aronofsky moves on

Well, that was quick.

In November, news broke that Darren Aronofsky and Jennifer Lawrence had split after a year — and a challenging press tour for "Mother!" — together. Now, it's January. A new year. A new Aronofsky. So naturally, the 48-year-old director is flitting about Sundance with a new young blonde on his arm: 26-year-old Suki Waterhouse.

Aronofsky and Waterhouse — one of those people that the upper echelons of some intense PR firm keep trying to make *happen* — were spotted braving the icy terrain of Park City, Utah, on Tuesday. And let me be the first to tell you: They were standing very close together, so you know what that means. They're not cold, they're in love!

Waterhouse, a model and apparently an actress, has been linked to the likes of Diego Luna and Bradley Cooper.

Um, good luck, I guess? Not really sure what Aronofsky's pull is with these young ladies, but I suppose some things are just meant to be a mystery.

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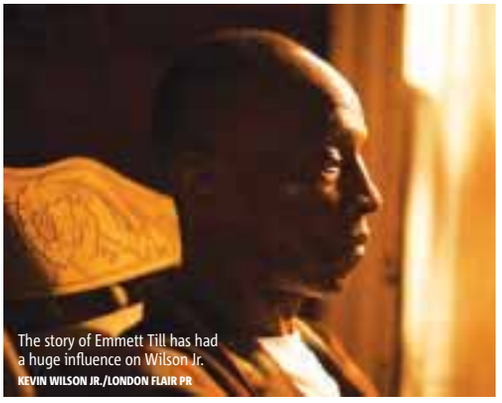
What's it really like to be nominated for an Oscar?

Metro chats with first-time nominee Kevin Wilson Jr. about his short film, "My Nephew Emmett."

GREGORY WAKEMAN
Gregory.Wakeman@metro.us



The story of Emmett Till has had a huge influence on Wilson Jr.
KEVIN WILSON JR./LONDON FLAIR PR

Kevin Wilson Jr. has probably lost count of the amount of times he's said "thank you" over the past 24 hours.

The 28-year-old writer and director has received an Academy Award nomination for his live-action short, "My Nephew Emmett." The film tells the story of the kidnapping and lynching of Emmett Till in 1955 Mississippi from the perspective of his guardian and uncle, Mose Wright.

The young filmmaker, who's part of the New York University Graduate Film Program, insisted that this nomination was never targeted. "It's not really for personal recognition," he says over the phone. "The goal for us was to get it seen by as many people as possible. The story is so important to the conversation of equality in America, and justice."

Till's death has played a huge part in shaping Wilson's life. Born and raised in North Carolina, the self-described "Southern boy" recalls being told the story of Till's lynching at age 5 — and how the image of Till's mutilated body stuck with him for years. So much so that his first play at North Carolina A&T revolved around Till's tragic story.

When it came to make a short, Wilson was inspired by becoming a father — and changed the perspective to that of Till's guardian, Mose, who helplessly watched as his beloved charge was taken from his home in the middle of the night. "I wanted to explore that feeling of helplessness that a parent or guardian feels when they have to give their child or relative to a person that they know is going to do them harm," he says. "There was a certain sense of fear or despair that comes with that."

And now he's here, preparing for his first time as an Academy Award nominee. But the biggest question he has for the Academy is a pretty simple one — how many friends and family can he bring to the March 4 ceremony?

"I'm taking my wife and my mom," he says. "I don't know how many tickets they give you! I would like to take my stepdad, too."

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‘Handmaid’s Tale: The Musical’ comes to Union Hall

things to do

Marcia Belsky (left), and Melissa Stokoski wrote, directed and star in “Handmaid’s Tale: The Musical,” premiering tonight at Union Hall in Brooklyn. MINDY TUCKER

A musical parody of Margaret Atwood’s dystopia set in Brooklyn? Praise be!

KATE MOONEY
kate.mooney@metro.us

Ever wondered what it would be like if the Republic of Gilead took over Brooklyn?

That’s what Marcia Belsky and Melissa Stokoski found themselves imagining when they watched “The Handmaid’s Tale” on Hulu. The Brooklyn-based comedians had been working on a musical parody of “Fiddler on the Roof” reinvisioned during the L Train shutdown — the family is forced to move to Astoria — but when that infrastructure nightmare got pushed back, they thought, why not first do a musical parody of “Handmaid’s Tale” set in Brooklyn?

“We loved the show but we all shared this thing about how difficult it is to watch, how every episode you kind of have to force your way through,” says Belsky, host of the podcast “Misandry with Marcia and Rae.” Staging a musical parody was a way to “take this Handmaid’s narrative and make it not as brutal to endure.”

“Handmaid’s Tale: The Musical,” which the two wrote, directed, and star in, opens tonight at Union Hall.

In their version of Gilead, young women in the borough realize something sinister is afoot when they begin to lose access to privileges of the Brooklyn bubble.

Hip handmaids JULIA JOHNS

“They lose their social media accounts, can’t get Ubers, Seamless is down, brunch reservations are canceled with no warning,” says Stokoski, host of “Bitches Brew” stand-up comedy at Halyard’s Bar.

The Commanders are wealthy liberal elites that are not so secretly men’s rights activists, while the handmaids are hip millennial women assigned to Carroll Gardens brownstones. The Serena Joys are “those Park Slope moms we’ve all worked for who are like, ‘Yeah, I went to the march, too,’ and act like they’re on your side, but there’s still that class divide,” explains Belsky.

Belsky is Offred (played by Elisabeth Moss in the show), here portrayed as a “stereotypical naive musical heroine, who moves to NYC to pursue her dreams and ends up living in Bay Ridge,” she explains. Stokoski costars as Ofglen (Alexis Bledel), here renamed Rory Gilmore, as a joke on how while watching the series, it was nearly impossible to extricate Bledel from her “Gilmore Girls” character.

Nick (swoon-worthy as Max Minghella in the show) here goes as “Extremely Hot Nick,” as a nod to how in the series, his seductive vibe is “so distracting you almost forget it’s a dystopia.” Janine is reincarnated as “Janine the One-Eyed Bitch,” a drunk Brooklyn party girl who “goes crazy because she had a verified Twitter account and can’t accept that it’s gone.”

And in this imagining, the handmaids carry out their rebellion successfully. “We give them more of a happy ending, because it’s a musical, and we wanted it to be cathartic,” says Stokoski. “We wanted to make it funny while we still can, before we’re imprisoned.”

“The Handmaid’s Tale” premiere is sold out. Check unionhallny.com for tickets to a second show on Feb. 10 and additional performances in late February.

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Survive winter the Swiss way

The world's best chef Daniel Humm is sharing his traditional family dinners at The NoMad Bar.

EVA KIS
eva.kis@metro.us

Mothers all over the world know nothing brings a family together like melted cheese.

In the Swiss home of chef Daniel Humm, the meal everyone gathered around once a week was a pot of fondue, and now he's sharing that tradition with New York.

Humm, crowned 2017's best chef in the world for Eleven Madison Park, is bringing the nostalgic fondue dinner to Sunday nights at The NoMad Bar, beginning Jan. 28.

He created the three-course menu not with his mom but in collaboration with NoMad's executive chef Mike Reilly — who felt a bit of understandable nerves.

The meal ends with tarte tatin and a traditional Alpine drink.

"I was immediately excited to introduce something new, and simultaneously nervous to recreate a dish he grew up eating," says Reilly. "The pressure was on!"

Authenticity was the priority — then come the expected high-end flourishes. "The elements of the fondue are what chef Daniel grew up eating in Switzerland, at home and at local restaurants: melted cheese, potato and bread," Reilly explains. "Where we elevate it is in the ingredients."

Let's just say you'll need a bit of the same refined endurance that defines the Swiss to tackle this feast.

The first course begins with a salad of winter greens with lardons and pepitas, along with an assortment of charcuterie and pretzels with a jar of chicken consommé, a "traditional savory but light treat in Switzerland," explains Reilly.

Next is the main event, a fondue with the essential white wine and kirsch that make it truly authentic. But Reilly's not giving away all his secrets.

"We knew the cheese had to be Swiss, and we knew we knew we wanted to elevate the sauce, so we got to work putting together a really delicious fondue using a few atypical Alpine cheeses that aren't commonly used for melting," he says.

Those craving something more extravagant can add soft scrambled eggs and black truffles ($45) to the mix, which comes with marbled potatoes and fresh baked sourdough bread for dipping.

For dessert, there's tarte tatin — apple pie by any name is just as delicious — and a glass of shümli pflüml, an après ski treat in the Alps made with coffee, plum eau de vie and cream that you thankfully won't have to try to pronounce.

The fondue dinner is $55 per person, available Jan. 28-March 4 at The NoMad Bar, 10 W. 28th St. For reservations, call 212-796-1500.

Fondue dinners are a weekly tradition in Switzerland.
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE NOMAD BAR

Pull an all-nighter

Brooklyn's 12-hour Night of Philosophy and Ideas challenges you to see a wider world.

EVA KIS
eva.kis@metro.us

Living in our modern dystopia is exhausting — which is why Brooklyn is throwing an all-night spiritual reboot.

A Night of Philosophy and Ideas is a 12-hour marathon of chances to see the world in new ways and find not just our own personal strength, but discover what we're capable of together.

A co-production of the French Embassy and the Brooklyn Public Library, the overnight event turns the entire central library in Grand Army Plaza into a forum for ideas, performances, screenings, music and more.

"It was overwhelming in the most positive, amazing sense," says László Jakab Orsós, VP of arts and culture at the Brooklyn Library about hosting 7,000 people last year for the event.

"It is a party, but it's actually pretty serious. We are focusing on current issues that we know people without any age limit can relate to."

Revolutionary spirit

From sunset to sunrise, more than 60 events will take place in every part of the library — between the shelves, in the hallways and within its appropriately named Grand Lobby, "meandering around the physical space" as Orsos puts it.

"I hadn't seen Woodstock, but it felt like a tame version of Woodstock," he recalls. "It was really amazing to see people drifting along, talking about ideas, getting to know one another."

Though not officially part of the city-wide '60s festival, A Night of Philosophy and Ideas also nods to how our modern era faces the same problems as we did in the 1960s. Philosophers will speak to issues of revolution and feminism, religion and compassion.

Each philosopher will give a 20-minute presentation, after which the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions.

The power of collective action

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the student-led protests against capitalism and traditional values in France, another modern revolutionary will give the keynote address: George Yancy, author of "Dear White America."

"We thought it would be important to reiterate the sentiment of speaking up, having the courage and the bravery to say what needs to be said," says Orsos. "We thought he would be the best person to reiterate and re-envision the sentiment of '68."

Yoga and musical performances accompany all the critical thinking at A Night of Philosopy and Ideas. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Yes, there's food

Don't worry, you're not expected to absorb 12 hours of philosophy without fortification. There are coffee stations all over the library, as well as free breakfast in the morning.

And if your mind needs a break, there's plenty of performances to check out. French acrobatic troupe Compagnie XY will be performing its unique brand of circus arts, magicians will show you an illusion — then explain the psychology of believing in tricks. Or you can take a step totally out of our world with the virtual reality experience Planet.

Among the many musical acts are the Women's March Resistance Revival Chorus, harpist Brandee Younger and Grammy-nominated singer Theo Bleckmann performing Vietnam War-era songs.

Then at dawn, philosophers and traditional Greek musicians will hold a Symposium on Love, followed by a yoga session.

A Night of Philosophy and Ideas takes place Jan. 27-28 from 7 p.m.-7 a.m. Free; nightofphilosophyandideas.com

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ARTS

XIVariete

Company XIV — the scantily-clad, genre-bending dance troupe best known for its annual Nutcracker Rouge — debuts its newest show at its Bushwick home this week. XIVariete is an evolving cabaret-style event blending burlesque, aerial, ballet, music and more, all woven together in a performance unlike any other in the city. No two nights of XIVariete are quite the same, but one thing you know is that champagne will be flowing.
Jan. 25-Feb. 24, Theatre VIX, 383 Troutman St., Brooklyn, $55-$260, companyxiv.xom

WELLBEING

Happiness Is A Choice You Make

January is probably the month we spend the most time thinking about our personal happiness and the choices we're willing to make to achieve it — so we have all those stories we want to tell our grandkids. To reveal the secrets of living the kind of life you look back on with joy, New York Timesjournalist Jon Leland spent a year among seniors to write Happiness Is A Choice You Make and will discuss what he learned with fellow journalist Julie Scelfo at the Brooklyn Historical Society on Thursday.
Jan. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 128 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn, $5, brooklynhistory.org

THEATER

PROVIDED

BroadwayCon

The convention designed with theater lovers in mind returns to the Javits Center for the third year, with events ranging from singalongs and autograph sessions to workshops and performances from the casts of upcoming shows. One highlight is Return to the Heights, a 10-year reunion for the original cast of In the Heights, the musical about New York life that put Lin Manuel Miranda in the spotlight as both show creator and star long before even your mom knew him from Hamilton.
Jan. 26-28, Jacob Javits Center, 655 W. 34th St. $90-$220, broadwaycon.com

GOALS

Life Hack Academy Live

You know you've been sucked into those listicles claiming they can teach you easy shortcuts to spare you seconds per day. Now join the pros for a full evening of expert tips, all in one place, demonstrated before your very eyes, at Life Hack Academy Live. Ford presents this free event with demos ranging from Small Spaces Hacks with design duo The Minimalists to Hacks & Snacks with Deb Perelman of Smitten Kitchen.
Jan. 25, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Altman Building, 135 W. 18th St., free, lifehackacademylive.com

WINTER

Bryant Park Winter Carnival

Bryant Park is a hub of cold weather fun every year, but the Winter Carnival takes it up a few notches — just in time to save us from the cynicism that creeps in once the holiday glow fades. The sparkling ice skaters, cozy hot chocolate and silent disco parties should do the trick. If not, just head to the Brewhouse for a cold one to wash the ennui away. It all kicks off with an opening event Friday, featuring Olympian Johnny Weir.
Jan. 16-Feb. 4, Bryant Park, free, bryantpark.org

MUSIC

Cloud Cult

Lincoln Center's American Songbook series kicked off this week, paying tribute to the nation's best singers and songwriters with intimate concerts. One opening week highlight is Cloud Cult, an indie band blending acoustic and electronic vibes; Friday's concert includes live art-making.
Jan. 26, 8:30 p.m., Appel Room, 10 Columbus Circle, $30-$100, americansongbook.org

SUMMER-ISH

Beer, Bourbon & BBQ Festival

The alliteration is cute, but these three words don't need any fancy tricks to add to their appeal: The Beer, Bourbon & BBQ Festival pays tribute to Southern cooking and all-American imbibing with over 60 beers, over 40 bourbons and a shameless amount of barbecue. There are three sessions and themes based on how much you want to indulge your gluttony.
Jan. 27, The Tunnel in Manhattan, 608 W. 28th St., $99-$109, drinkeatrelax.com

SPORTS

Jets House

The New York Jets are coming out to meet fans this weekend at Jets House, with players making appearances at SPiN New York for meet-and-greets, autographs and even a ping-pong tournament! The sessions include live entertainment as well as food and drinks.
Jan. 28-29, 48 E. 23rd St., $109-$119, jetshouse.newyorkjets.com

HOT TICKET

Se7en Mystery Dinner

If the idea of a serial killer targeting people based on the Seven Deadly Sins doesn't put you off a little gluttony, Alamo Drafthouse Brooklyn is holding a Se7en Mystery Dinner next week. Each of the seven courses served during the screening will come in a sealed box, marked with the sin it's themed around. Hope you can hang onto your appetite until the end. **Jan. 30, 6:30 p.m., 445 Albee Square W., $70, drafthouse.com**

T. MICHELLE MURPHY

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Europe's new capital of culture

Every year, a new city becomes the heart of the region's arts scene. Here's everything you need to see in 2018's honoree, Valletta.

Fodor's Travel

St. John's Co-Cathedral is a Baroque wonder. PAULLEW, FLICKR

St. John's Co-Cathedral

The 16th-century co-cathedral is noted for its opulent Baroque interiors — with vaulted ceilings and intricate carvings, there's a good argument to be made that it is one of the finest examples of Baroque architecture in Europe — as well as its collection of fine art. The church is home to a series of paintings depicting the life of St. John the Baptist by Italian artist Mattia Pretti, but its masterpiece is Caravaggio's The Beheading of St John the Baptist, which was completed in Malta.

The City Gate

Five different gates have guarded the entrance to Valletta over the past 450 years. The one that stands now was designed by "starchitect" Renzo Piano (best known for his work on London's Shard), the new sand-colored stone gate attracted much controversy (as well as admiration) for its contemporary design. Renzo's project also includes an open-air theater within the ruins of the former Royal Opera House and a new parliament building.

Spazju Kreattive at St. James Cavalier

The 16th-century fortification of St. James Cavalier was built by the Order of St. John to guard the entrance to Valletta. In 2000, this ancient space was transformed into a dazzling arts center. Now known as Spazju Kreattive ("creative space"), the historical site is home to a mix of Baroque and contemporary architecture and encompasses art galleries, a theater, a cinema, and a packed program of cultural events.

Casa Rocca Piccola

The 16th-century palazzo Casa Rocca Piccola is the family home of the 9th Marquis de Piro. The Marquis and Marchioness still live there and have opened part of the palazzo to the public, which you can visit on guided tours that are sometimes led by the couple themselves. Visitors can walk through a maze of rooms showcasing a variety of architectural styles, from art nouveau to Palladian; see parts of the family's art and antique collection, including glass chandeliers, jewelry, and religious artifacts; and get a unique insight into the privileged lifestyle of the aristocracy.

Casa Rocca Piccola PROVIDED

Blitz Art Gallery

Malta's first independent contemporary gallery, Blitz Art Gallery, is housed in a restored and repurposed 400-year-old four-story Valletta townhouse. Blitz supports experimental and radical arts practices through exhibitions, workshops, and a residency program, which invites artists to live and work in the building.

Gozo Contemporary

Run by the well-known Maltese artist Norbert Francis Attard, who represented Malta in the 48th Venice Biennale in 1999, Gozo Contemporary is located on the neighboring island of Gozo (an easy 20-minute ferry ride from Cirkewwa on the island of Malta). The space offers artists working in various mediums the opportunity to live and work on Gozo for short periods of time. They then have their work shown to the public in the gallery space.

Public Art

One of artist Francis Attard's most notable public works can be found in the rather unexpected surroundings of a public toilet in Valletta's old red light district of Strait Street. "V," named after the Thomas Pynchon novel that is partly set in the area, features a red shuttered window listing words beginning with the letter v on the outside and a neon light in the shape of a V and a sound piece inside.

Back around the redeveloped City Gate area, take a look at what piece of public art might be currently on display. One of the most memorable, and controversial, pieces of the last few years was a statue of a three-legged horse, symbolizing lost power, by the local artist Austin Camilleri.

Teatru Manoel

Back in Valletta, Teatru Manoel is thought to be the third-oldest working theater in Europe. Built in 1731 on the orders of the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller, the theater is a Baroque gem with gold leaf-decorated boxes and a trompe-l'oeil ceiling. As well as catching one of its many productions in Maltese or English, you can take a guided tour of the theater and adjoining museum.

Valletta 2018

In celebration of the launch of the Valletta 2018 cultural program, the Valletta 2018 Opening Ceremony takes place on the 20th of January 2018. The full opening celebrations, however, will take up an entire week from the 14th to the 21st, bringing live music, dancers, street artists, and performers to the city's four main squares—St George's Square, St John's Square, Castille Square, and the area around the Triton Fountain—as well as some lesser-trafficked historic spaces all around Valletta.

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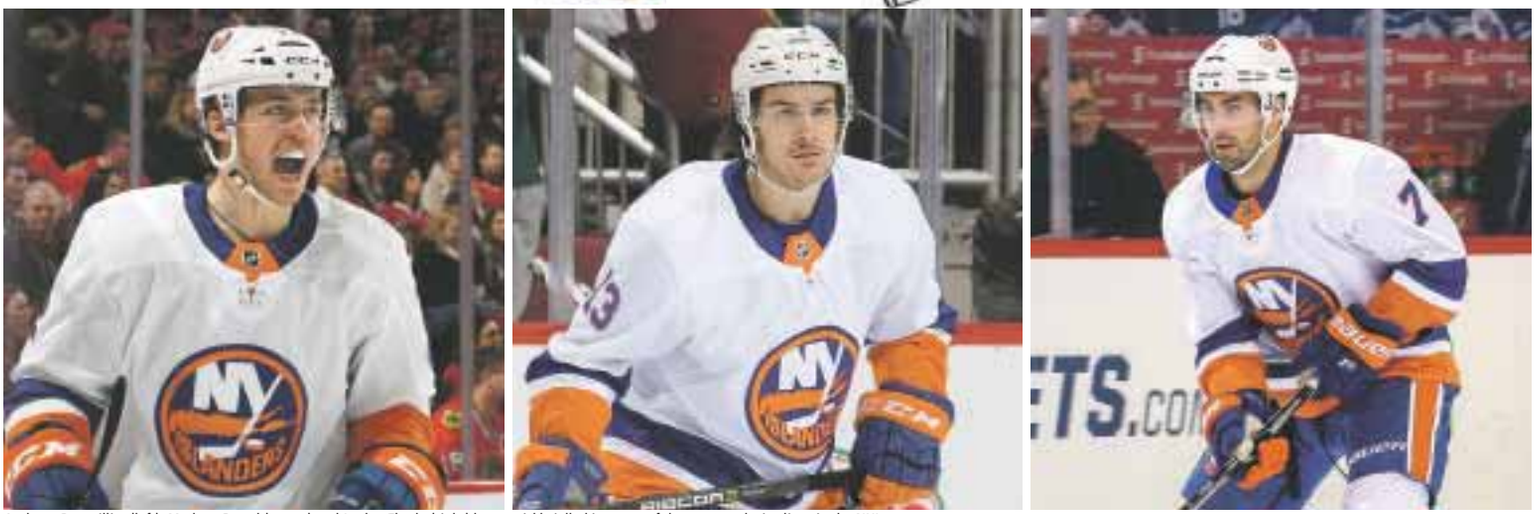

Anthony Beauvillier (left), Mathew Barzal (center) and Jordan Eberle (right) have quickly jelled into one of the most explosive lines in the NHL. GETTY IMAGES

Isles second line becoming elite

New York's second scoring unit has been unstoppable over the past seven games.

JOE PANTORNO
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

Offense has rarely been the problem for the New York Islanders this season.

Through 49 games, they have scored 170 goals, tied for tops in the NHL as the first line of John Tavares, Josh Bailey and Anders Lee have been close to unstoppable. Lee (27 goals) and Tavares (26 goals) are ranked in the top five on the league's top scorers chart while Bailey ranks second in the NHL in assists with 42.

But lately, it's been another Islanders line pieced together that has been carrying the team at times.

New York's second line of center Mathew Barzal, right winger Jordan Eberle and left winger Anthony Beauvillier have been a revelation over the past seven games after regular second-line winger Andrew Ladd went down with an upper-body injury that is expected to hold him out until the end of January.

The problem is, head coach Doug Weight might not want to break up his most explosive line.

Not too long ago, the 20-year-old Beauvillier was in the minors trying to hone his game after being sent down by the Islanders shortly after New Year's Eve. In 31 games to start the year, he was failing to provide much offensive support as he put up just four goals and three assists for seven points on the third line.

But Ladd's injury forced the Islanders to recall Beauvillier and put him on the second line.

Waiting for him was the Barzal, one of the league's top rookies who is also just 20 years old and garnering serious consideration for the Calder Trophy — the NHL's award for Rookie of the Year — and Eberle, the veteran of the trio at 27.

Barzal is averaging over a point a game with 16 goals (ranked second among rookies), 34 assists (first among rookies) and 50 points (also first among rookies).

He became just the fourth rookie in the past 20 years to put up 50 points in his first 50 games, joining Sidney Crosby, Alexander Ovechkin and Evgeni Malkin. That's pretty elite company.

All the while, Eberle provides a strong playmaking presence on the wing with 16 goals and 22 assists of his own.

The three have been all but unstoppable over the seven games they've skated together, giving the Islanders a grouping of six forwards that can rival any of the top scoring units in the NHL.

After recording just seven points through those difficult first 31 games, Beauvillier has scored eight goals, including four in New York's last two games, and added an assist in the seven games since being recalled and joining the second line.

"He's been a machine," Islanders head coach Doug Weight told MSG Network. "He's been strong. It's just amazing what confidence can do for somebody, isn't it? He was losing every puck battle and getting pushed around. He's strong enough, he's done it. It was just a great reboot for him, he's a great kid and he's come back with a fire in his eye and it's really been valuable for us."

His linemates have been all-too-willing to oblige on the playmaking side of things as Barzal has a trio of goals and 10 assists for 13 points during that stretch while Eberle has added nine points (2 goals, 7 assists) of his own.

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Isles likely to return to Coliseum

The New York Islanders are approaching a deal that would see them play a number of home games at the Nassau Coliseum while their new arena at Belmont Park is being built, per Newsday's Jim Baumbach. A decision is expected to be made in the coming days.

The Islanders would not play all of their home games at their old arena, splitting time with the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. New York played at the Coliseum in Uniondale from 1972-2015 before moving the Brooklyn.

Once an agreement with Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment — the company that owns both the Coliseum and Barclays Center — is reached, then the distribution of games between the venues will be figured out.

Early indications are that 12 home games would be played at the Coliseum next season and would expand to 20 or 21 in 2019-20 depending on initial attendance figures.

The Coliseum hosted an Isles exhibition game in September. GETTY IMAGES

It hasn't been much of a secret that the Islanders wanted to make a temporary return to the Coliseum, which underwent cosmetic renovations shortly after they left. However, it holds just 13,000 fans for hockey, which is not ideal for NHL attendance figures. Granted, fan turnout at the Barclays Center has been poor since the team arrived for the 2015-16 season, ranking at or near the bottom of league attendance numbers.

On Dec. 20 at a press conference naming the Islanders the winner of the Belmont bid, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that he submitted a bid to the NHL to have the Islanders play their home games at the Nassau Coliseum.

While NHL commissioner Gary Bettman previously stated that the Coliseum wasn't a viable option to house the Islanders, he took a tour of the arena on Jan. 9 with Islanders co-owner Jon Ledecky and Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment CEO Brett Yormak to see just how legitimate an option the venue could be.

Ground for the Islanders' new Belmont arena is not expected to be broken until at least March of 2019 after a mandatory environmental review process is carried out. That would put the arena's prospective completion date on track for the start of the 2020-21 season, meaning the Islanders could be playing at the Coliseum for at least two seasons.

JOE PANTORNO

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1. DiMeo PJ. Psychosocial and Relationship Issues in Men with Erectile Dysfunction. Urologic Nursing. 2006 Dec; 26(6): 442-453. 4. Viagra Prescribing Information, Revised January 2010. 5. Cialis Prescribing Information, Revised October 2011. 6. Levitra Prescribing Information, Revised November 2011.

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Columbia University Medical Center

The Knicks could trade either Kyle O'Quinn (left) and Willy Hernangomez (right) before the NBA's deadline. GETTY IMAGES

Knicks big men being pursued

New York is receiving plenty of attention from teams looking to relieve them of their logjam at center.

JOE PANTORNO
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

The New York Knicks have no depth issues at the center position. With four big men contending for playing time, the logjam at the 5 has left some in the cold while providing a showcase for others.

ESPN's Ian Begley reported that the Knicks could trade one of their centers before the NBA's Feb. 8 deadline.

Per Begley, three of the four New York centers have garnered attention on the market, the lone one to not generate any trade talks being Joakim Noah, whose large contract and problems both on and off the court make him a target to avoid.

Starting center Enes Kanter has received interest though as he is just 44 games into his Knicks tenure after being acquired from the Oklahoma City Thunder in the Carmelo Anthony deal. The 25-year-old has quickly developed into a fan favorite thanks to his candid attitude, a willingness to get in the face of the opposition and his tenacity on the boards. He's also one of the Knicks' most important offensive assets, averaging 13.5 points to go with 10 rebounds per game.

Kanter has already stated his desire to stay with the Knicks for the long haul, wishing to retire in New York's blue and orange. He is signed through the 2018-19 season where he is slated to make $18.6 million.

Behind him, Kyle O'Quinn has developed into a vital part of New York's frontcourt off the bench. On an average of 17 minutes per game, the 27-year-old is giving the Knicks 6.9 points and 5.8 rebounds. Per 36 minutes, those numbers swell to 14.5 points and 12.4 rebounds.

According to Begley, the Golden State Warriors have expressed interest in O'Quinn while the Houston Rockets could also be a possible suitor.

Then comes Willy Hernangomez, the promising 23-year-old who was expected to challenge Kanter for the starting center role heading into this season. However, Hernangomez has been unable to secure any sort of regular playing time, appearing in just 21 games with an average of 9.7 minutes per outing.

Hernangomez showed tons of promise last year in a far-less crowded frontcourt, putting up 8.2 points and 7.0 rebounds per game in 72 appearances. His showing last season is the main reason why he is getting the most attention on the market among the three.

Per Stefan Bondy of the New York Daily News, the Utah Jazz is one of the teams interested.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 45-53 Bell Blvd., Bayside, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. 02 BBQ Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number 1307484, for Beer, Wine & Cider has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Wine & Cider at retail in a Restaurant & Bakery under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 10-12 Saint Pauls Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301. Richmond County, for on-premises consumption. Atlixco Bakery & Deli Inc. d/b/a Atlixco Bakery & Deli.

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SUPREME COURT:
QUEENS COUNTY
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Plaintiff (s) vs. MINNIE JOHNSON LEWIS; et al; Defendant (s)
Attorney (s) for Plaintiff (s):
ROSICKI, ROSICKI & ASSOCIATES, P.C., 2 Summit Court, Suite 301, Fishkill, New York, 12524, 845.897.1600
Pursuant to judgment of foreclosure and sale granted herein on or about October 20, 2017, I will sell at Public Auction to the highest bidder at the QUEENS COUNTY SUPREME COURT, located at 88-11 SUTPHIN BOULEVARD, JAMAICA, NEW YORK, IN COURTROOM #25. On February 2, 2018 at 10:00 am. Premises known as 16104 121ST AVE, JAMAICA, NY 11434
Block: 12553 Lot: 9
All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Borough and County of Queens, City and State of New York, and designated as and by Lots Numbered 13 and 14 in Block 10 on a certain map entitled, "Map of Jamaica Park, Property of the Greater City Homes, situated at Jamaica in the Fourth Ward of New York, State of New York, Surveyed July 1906 by E.W. Conklin, C.S., Jamaica, New York, and filed in the Office of the Clerk (now Register) of Queens County November 20, 1906 as Map Number 742". As more particularly described in the judgment of foreclosure and sale. Sold subject to all of the terms and conditions contained in said judgment and terms of sale. Approximate amount of judgment $560,230.75 plus interest and costs.
INDEX NO. 24126/10
Scott Kaufman, Esq., Referee

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NOTICE OF SALE

SUPREME COURT:
QUEENS COUNTY
U.S. BANK TRUST, N.A., AS TRUSTEE FOR LSF9 MASTER PARTICIPATION TRUST;
Plaintiff (s) vs. PARSRAM SANKAR; SAVITRI SANKAR; et al;
Defendant (s)
Attorney (s) for Plaintiff (s):
ROSICKI, ROSICKI & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
2 Summit Court, Suite 301
Fishkill, New York, 12524
845.897.1600
Pursuant to judgment of foreclosure and sale granted herein on or about February 27, 2017, I will sell at Public Auction to the highest bidder at the QUEENS COUNTY SUPREME COURT, located at 88-11 SUTPHIN BOULEVARD, JAMAICA, NEW YORK, IN COURTROOM # 25. On February 2, 2018 at 10:00 am. Premises known as 104-45 111TH STREET, RICHMOND HILL, NY 11419
Block: 9534 Lot: 71
ALL that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, situate, lying and being in the Borough and County of Queens, City and State of New York. As more particularly described in the judgment of foreclosure and sale. Sold subject to all of the terms and conditions contained in said judgment and terms of sale. Approximate amount of judgment $814,025.33 plus interest and costs.
INDEX NO. 702240/2014
Dominic A. Villoni, Esq., Referee

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 149-44/46 41st Ave., Flushing, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Mr. Wang Mandoo Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer, Wine & Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Wine & Liquor at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 157-12 Northern Blvd., Flushing, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Tippling Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number Pending, for On Premise Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 1 East 33rd St., New York, NY 10016. New York County, for on-premises consumption. M & J Hospitality Group LLC d/b/a 800 Degrees Pizza.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Serial # 1305656, for Liquor, Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 178 Mulberry St., New York, NY 10013. New York County, for on premise consumption. SUD 123 Incorporated.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license Number 1307132, for On Premises Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Wine & Liquor at retail in a Bar/Tavern under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 40-01 149th Place, Flushing, NY 11354. Queens County, for on-premises consumption. New Camellia Café Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number 1306393, for Restaurant Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Wine, Beer & Cider at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 108 East 4th Street, West Store, New York, NY 10003. New York County, for on premises consumption. Soooh NYC Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 20-07 127th St., 4th FL., College Point, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Buffet De Point Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 193-16 Northern Blvd., Unit B, Flushing, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Cape Food Corp.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 41-11 150th St., Flushing, NY. Queens County, for on premises consumption. Wando Restaurant Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVE that a license, Number Pending, for Beer, Wine & Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Wine & Liquor at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 103 Lexington Ave., New York, NY. New York County, for on premises consumption. Dera Restaurant NYC Inc.

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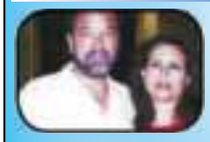

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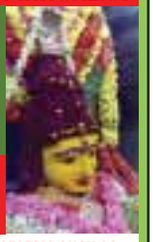

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38 Plug away
39 Wind up
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41 Thief's need
42 Slopes
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46 Galley mover
48 Missouri range
51 Is it bigger than a --?
55 Windmill blade
56 Started a poker game
58 British composer
59 "Paint the Sky With Stars" singer
60 Cook's smock
61 Kind of roast
62 Very, informally
63 Edible lichen
64 This, in Havana

Down
1 Contractors' figures
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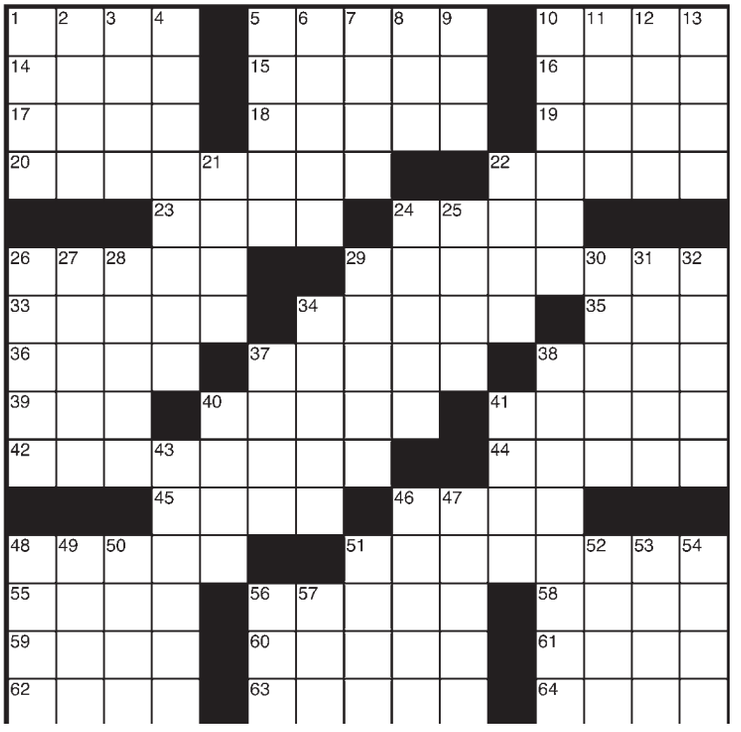
3 Sturdy lock
4 Pollen result
5 Censor
6 Speckled horses
7 Them in "Them!"
8 Fair grade
9 Go wrong
10 "I" trouble?
11 Croquet site
12 "Fish Magic" artist
13 Back talk
21 Ms. Winslet
22 Cautious
24 Diners' options
25 Outlaws
26 Made a decision
27 Lorelei's river
28 Uses glue
29 Vetoes
30 Desktop symbols
31 -- up (enliven)
32 Some are white
34 Wasps' homes
37 Kind of sausage
38 Poet Sara --
40 Shock the schnoz
41 Knock -- -- loop
43 Boxed breakfast
46 Synthetic fabric
47 Insurance giant
48 Not sunnyside up
49 Grey of Western novels
50 Writer -- Seton
51 Silo companion
52 Pals
53 Sleep -- --
54 Lawless role
56 Water barrier
57 Envir. monitor



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easy

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hard

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metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Indulgent behavior will get you into trouble. Partnerships will take a dive if you aren't a team player. Choose to make a romantic gesture over a hostile impasse.

Taurus Engage in talks that will broaden your outlook or help you make wise decisions regarding your position, status or relationships with others.

Gemini Discussing matters regarding a joint venture, family inheritance or settlement will shed light on when things will wrap up. A personal claim can be made.

Cancer Don't shy away from an unusual opportunity. Embrace the future with optimism and openness. You have plenty to gain if you use your intelligence.

Leo Overreacting will lead to trouble. Try to understand what's actually happening, instead of acting on an assumption you've made. Keep situations in perspective.

Virgo A short trip to visit someone from your past will be enlightening. If you express your feelings openly, you'll discover that someone you like shares your thoughts.

Libra Look over and take care of money matters or settlements. Act on your own behalf and refuse to let personal influences get in the way of you doing what's right.

Scorpio Your emotions will be close to the surface. Get what's bothering you off your chest. Speak up and find out how others feel before you make a move or final decision.

Sagittarius Discipline will go a long way. Sort through all the information offered before you commit to help someone else get ahead. You'll have regrets if you sell yourself short.

Capricorn Make a positive lifestyle change. Contribute to your savings and update any documents before they lapse. Home improvements should be budgeted carefully.

Aquarius Keep a low profile and work quietly on your own to get things done. Refuse to let personal matters deter you from taking care of your responsibilities.

Pisces Share your experience with people you want to impress. A chance to make a difference for someone will be helpful when you need something in return. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

T	A	T	A	R		A	N	N	A		E	L	E	C
B	R	Y	C	E		R	O	O	T		M	I	N	A
A	I	M	E	D		U	T	I	L		I	R	A	S
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			L	O	G	O	S		L	O	G	G	E	D
	A	L	A	M	O			B	E	F	O	G		
N	E	E	D	S		B	R	I	E	F		L	A	B
O	R	A	L		M	I	E	S		E	V	I	T	A
G	I	V	E		O	L	I	O		R	I	N	K	S
S	E	E	D		T	E	N	N		S	A	G	A	S

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